

Approved June 19, 2009.

Filed with the Secretary of State, June 19, 2009.

H.C.R. No. 55

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The 400th birthday of modern astronomy is being marked in 2009 as the International Year of Astronomy, and this worldwide celebration represents a fine opportunity to pay tribute to the Lone Star State's leadership in astronomical research; and

WHEREAS, In 1609, the Italian astronomer Galileo Galilei first used a telescope to study the skies, and that same year, the German astronomer Johannes Kepler published his famous laws of planetary motion in the book *Astronomia Nova*; sponsored by the International Astronomical Union and UNESCO, the International Year of Astronomy 2009 commemorates these revolutionary developments with activities and events around the globe; and

WHEREAS, Located in the Davis Mountains of West Texas, the McDonald Observatory of The University of Texas at Austin is one of the world's leading centers for astronomical research and education; its research instruments include the Hobby-Eberly Telescope, one of the world's largest optical telescopes, with a 433-inch mirror; and

WHEREAS, The Observatory Visitors Center delights and informs 100,000 people a year with its exhibits, tours, and star parties; the observatory also produces the nationally syndicated *StarDate* and *Universo* radio programs and websites, bringing the latest in scientific research to audiences in English and Spanish; and

WHEREAS, During the IYA 2009, The University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M are collaborating on the development of the Giant Magellan Telescope, one of the world's largest new telescopes; and

WHEREAS, McDonald Observatory and the physics department of Texas A&M University are beginning to work with several other institutions on a groundbreaking study of dark energy, which has been called "the central problem for physics" by Nobel laureate and UT professor Steven Weinberg; representing 70 percent of the total energy in the universe, dark energy is the mysterious force causing the expansion of the cosmos to accelerate; and

WHEREAS, The Hobby-Eberly Telescope Dark Energy Experiment, or HETDEX, will use the Hobby-Eberly Telescope and the new VIRUS spectrograph, developed and constructed by UT and Texas A&M, to map the three-dimensional positions of one million galaxies over three years, providing scientists with important clues to the nature of dark energy; and

WHEREAS, The study of dark energy represents a revolution in the science of astronomy, and it is most fitting that in this anniversary year of historic scientific achievement, two of the premier research institutions in Texas are working together in the pioneering spirit of Kepler and Galileo to see further into the heart of the universe than anyone has before; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas hereby commemorate the International Year of Astronomy 2009 and celebrate the great contributions of The University of Texas at Austin McDonald Observatory and Texas A&M University in the continuing quest, from time immemorial, to bring the heavens within the compass of human understanding; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That official copies of this resolution be prepared for The University of Texas at Austin McDonald Observatory and the Texas A&M University Department of Physics as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives and Senate.

Rose
Brown of Brazos

Adopted by the House on February 24, 2009, by a non-record vote; adopted by the Senate on February 24, 2009, by a viva-voce vote.

Approved March 5, 2009.

Filed with the Secretary of State, March 5, 2009.

H.C.R. No. 57

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The Texas Legislature for each of the last 13 regular sessions has adopted a concurrent resolution authorizing the creation and appointment of joint interim legislative study committees by the lieutenant governor and speaker of the house of representatives; and

WHEREAS, Renewal of the prior authorizations to the presiding officers enables the legislature to address and study issues that remain unresolved on sine die adjournment or that emerge subsequent to that time; and

WHEREAS, It is also desirable to adopt by resolution various rules and policies regarding the operation of joint committees to supplement, and reconcile differences between, the senate and house rules of procedure; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the 81st Legislature of the State of Texas hereby authorize the lieutenant governor and speaker of the house of representatives to create by mutual agreement such joint committees as they consider necessary during the term of this legislature; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That each joint committee created pursuant to this resolution be composed of such combination of legislators, state officials, or citizen members as shall be determined mutually by the presiding officers of each house; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That on the request of the presiding officers, the governor may appoint members to a joint committee created pursuant to this resolution; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the presiding officers issue for each committee so created a joint proclamation identifying the issue or issues to be studied and listing the committee membership or describing the committee composition and that the proclamation be filed with the secretary of the senate and the chief clerk of the house of representatives; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the presiding officers designate jointly a chair, or designate alternatively two co-chairs, from among the committee membership; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the chair or co-chairs, acting jointly and within four weeks of the proclamation, prepare and present to the presiding officers a proposal for budget and staffing; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the chair or co-chairs be directed to use to the greatest extent possible the existing staff and administrative resources of committee members, standing committees, officers of the senate and house, and legislative service agencies; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the presiding officers jointly review each budget and staffing proposal, adopt budgetary and staffing allocations, and determine the manner in which each joint committee is to be funded; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the joint committee chair, or the co-chairs acting by mutual agreement, have authority to create and appoint subcommittees or affiliated advisory panels and to designate respective chairs for each, contingent on the advance approval of the presiding officers for the creation and appointment of subcommittees or advisory panels containing membership external to the committee; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That each joint committee, and its subcommittees and advisory panels, convene at the call of its chair or co-chairs; provided that no joint committee, nor its subcommittees or advisory panels, shall convene in a public hearing or other meeting for the transaction of business unless public notice has been posted by its chair or co-chairs at the locations specified by the senate and house rules of procedure for posting of notice of standing committee meetings at least five calendar days in advance of the hearing or meeting; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the preceding clause be construed, for purposes of Section 551.046, Government Code, as a joint rule of the senate and house of representatives controlling the posting of notice for joint committees, and their subcommittees and advisory panels, in lieu of required posting with the secretary of state; and, be it further